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FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS OBSERVER MISSION IN GEORGIA

Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the report of the Secretary-General on the financing of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG) (A/49/429 and Add.1). During its consideration of the report, the Committee met with representatives of the Secretary-General, who provided additional information.

2. During its consideration of the question of the financing of UNOMIG, the Committee was informed that, because of the period of time that has elapsed, some of the information contained in the Secretary-General's report, relating, inter alia, to the cost estimates for the period from 1 July 1994 to 13 January 1995 and for the period from 14 January 1995 to 13 January 1996 is no longer valid. The Committee was therefore provided with revised data, as discussed below, which are being issued in a second addendum to the Secretary-General's report (A/49/429/Add.2).

3. By its resolution 858 (1993) of 24 August 1993, the Security Council decided to establish UNOMIG for an initial period of six months. The mandate of UNOMIG has been extended by subsequent Security Council resolutions, the latest of which was resolution 937 (1994) of 21 July 1994, which extended the mandate through 13 January 1995. The Security Council also decided to authorize the Secretary-General to increase the strength of the Mission, as required, up to 136 military observers with appropriate civilian support staff.

4. As recalled in document A/49/429, the General Assembly, by its resolution 48/256 of 26 May 1994, authorized the Secretary-General to enter into commitments for the Mission at a rate not to exceed $334,200 gross ($313,000 net) per month for the period from 1 July to 31 October 1994, should the Security Council decide to continue the Mission beyond 30 June 1994 and subject to the prior concurrence of the Committee for the actual level of commitments to be entered into for the period, that amount to be apportioned among Member States in accordance with the scheme set out in the resolution.

5. By a letter dated 15 July 1994, the Committee gave its concurrence for the Secretary-General to enter into commitments in the amount of $226,400 gross ($212,000 net) for 22 military observers already deployed for the period from 1 to 21 July 1994, pursuant to resolution 48/256, that amount to be assessed on Member States, subject to the extension of the mandate beyond 21 July 1994 by the Security Council. The Committee also gave its concurrence for the Secretary-General to enter into commitments of $1,177,000 for start-up costs and recurring operational requirements of $88,000 gross ($87,500 net) for the additional 33 military observers, under the terms of General Assembly resolution 48/229 of 23 December 1993 on unforeseen and extraordinary expenses for the biennium 1994-1995.

6. For the period beyond 21 July 1994, the Committee authorized the Secretary-General to enter into commitments of up to $1,261,000 gross ($1,189,400 net) for a period of two months until 21 September 1994, consisting of $1,110,400 gross ($1,040,000 net) under the authority granted in resolution 48/256, to be assessed on Member States, and the balance of $150,600 gross ($149,400 net) under the terms of resolution 48/229.

7. Pending consideration by the General Assembly of the report contained in document A/49/429, the Committee, by a letter dated 6 September 1994, gave its concurrence for the Secretary-General to enter into commitments for UNOMIG in an amount of up to $7,910,200 gross ($7,798,600 net) for the period from 1 September to 21 October 1994, pursuant to the terms of resolution 48/229 on unforeseen and extraordinary expenses.

8. By a letter dated 27 October 1994, the Committee also gave its concurrence for the Secretary-general to enter into commitments for UNOMIG in the amount remaining on the $10 million ($1,939,200 gross) for the period from 22 October to 6 December 1994, pursuant to the terms of General Assembly resolution 48/229 on unforeseen and extraordinary expenses.

9. The current mandate period of UNOMIG will expire on 13 January 1995. Accordingly, the Secretary-General requests the General Assembly, at its forty-ninth session, to make appropriate provision for the Mission's expenses for the period beyond 13 January 1995, should the Security Council decide to continue the Mission beyond that date.

10. On the basis of the information provided to the Committee, paragraph 37 of the report of the Secretary-General (A/49/429), which enumerates the actions to be taken by the General Assembly in connection with the financing of UNOMIG, will be revised in document A/49/429/Add.2. The revised requirements are reflected in the paragraphs below.

Performance report for the period from 7 August 1993 to 31 March 1994

11. Annexes I and II to document A/49/429/Add.1 summarize and provide supplementary information in respect of the financial performance of the operation for the period from 7 August 1993 to 31 March 1994. As indicated therein, total expenditures amounted to $2,388,400 gross ($2,276,300 net)

resulting in an unencumbered balance of appropriations of $1,142,200 (gross and net). This balance results from obtaining vehicles from the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) at no cost to the Mission, delay in acquisition of communication equipment, receipt of two INMARSAT A terminals from the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia surplus and lower charges than anticipated for commercial communications.

Cost estimate for the period from 1 July 1994 to 13 January 1995

12. As indicated in paragraph 29 of his report (A/49/429), the Secretary-General estimates the cost of UNOMIG at $15,034,200 gross ($14,517,000 net) for the six-and-one-half-month period from 1 July 1994 to 13 January 1995. However, during consideration of the question of the financing of UNOMIG the representatives of the Secretary-General informed the Committee that those requirements would need to be revised downwards to reflect anticipated net savings of $5,782,800 after allowing for additional requirements totalling $463,000 for premises ($30,000), communications equipment ($250,000), medical supplies ($22,500) and freight ($160,500). The savings are due to reductions in the costs for military observers ($200,500), civilian staff costs ($1,668,300), transport operations ($3,376,500) and air operations ($1,000,500).

13. A total of 150 civilian posts (20 Professional, 23 Field Service, 10 Security Service, 16 General Service and 81 local staff) are proposed for the period from 1 September 1994 to 13 January 1995. Annexes VIII and IX to document A/49/429 provide details of the current and proposed staffing table and the relevant job descriptions for staff in the Professional category and above. The Committee notes that the proposed number of 150 posts reflects an increase of 99 posts over the current level of 51 posts. In this connection, the Committee notes from the report of the Secretary-General "that owing to the difficult conditions on the ground, the degraded state of the infrastructure, the lack of local personnel with the requisite skills and the paucity of necessary services, the number of international support staff required would be considerably larger than usual" (A/49/429, para. 16).

14. The Committee was informed that interpreters (3 internationcal and 51 local) were needed by UNOMIG, particularly to escort the military observers when they conduct daily patrols because the local population in the Mission area speak many different languages and very few of the military observers can speak the local languages.

15. After discussing at some length the question of civilian staff, the Committee concluded that the grade level and number of civilian staff was high. The Committee requests the Secretary-General to review this item with a view to ascertaining whether or not a smaller establishment would not be commensurate with the operational requirements of the Mission.

16. The Committee also requests that, in future, the Secretary-General should ensure that descriptions of posts indicate more accurately what is going to be performed. It is the view of the Committee that annex IX to document A/49/429, for example, is not a justification of posts in terms of the operational needs

of the Mission but a general description of posts ascending to what appears to be a standard format.

17. The Committee was informed that, as at 30 November 1994, the vacancy factor was 46 per cent for international staff and 50 per cent for local staff.

18. The Committee was further informed that the Mission will have two Headquarters, one at Sukhumi and the other at Pitsunda. The Committee requests the Secretary-General to look at this again in order to ensure that the structure of the Mission is designed in such a way that unnecessary financial expenditure is avoided.

19. The Committee was also informed that the status-of-mission agreement with the Government of Georgia has now been concluded. In this connection, the Committee believes that full application of the agreement should help to contain the costs.

20. Provision is made under air operations for the rental of one Super Puma medium helicopter and one fixed-wing Beechcraft aircraft (see A/49/429, annex IV, paras. 41 and 48). The Committee was informed the helicopter would be required as from 15 December 1994, while the aircraft would be utilized from 15 January 1995. With regard to the helicopter, the Committee was also informed that as from 15 December 1994 it will be contracted on an "as required basis". The Committee requests the Secretary-General to ensure that this change is cost effective.

21. The Secretary-General requests $733,900 under communications. However, the Committee notes that in the addendum being issued to the report of the Secretary-General (see para. 2 above) this amount has been revised upwards to $983,900, or $250,000 over the previous amount. This increase is due to the cost of one earth station for Pitsunda, in addition to the one at Sukhumi. Upon inquiry, the Committee was informed that both earth stations were required because the current status of the infrastructure in the Mission does not allow direct communication between Mission headquarters at Sukhumi and Pitsunda.

22. The Committee queries the necessity for the two VSAT stations and two INMARSAT A terminals for UNOMIG. The Committee understands that once the second VSAT station is operational, reliance on the costly INMARSAT service ($25,000 per month) can be reduced. The Committee expects that the second VSAT station will be on line as soon as possible and therefore recommends that the estimate for INMARSAT usage fee be reduced by $100,000.

23. The Committee notes that an amount of $1,603,700 is being proposed under other equipment. This includes $58,800 for office furniture, $98,300 for office equipment, $716,000 for data-processing equipment and $240,100 for generators. It is the view of the Committee that, given the size of the Mission, this request is high. For example, no justification is provided in the report of the Secretary-General for the acquisition of 28 executive chairs, 116 computer tables, 144 visitor's chairs and 88 secretary chairs, under office furniture, and server and software under data-processing equipment (see A/49/429, annex IV, paras. 64 and 66). Accordingly, the Committee recommends that this estimate be reduced by $303,700.

24. On the basis of information provided to the Committee, the Secretary-General is requesting appropriation of an amount of $9,251,400 gross ($8,950,700 net) for the period from 1 July 1994 to 13 January 1995. In view of its observations and recommendations (see paras. 15, 18, 19, 22 and 23 above), the Committee recommends that the General Assembly appropriate $8,847,700 gross ($8,547,000 net) for the period from 1 July 1994 to 13 January 1995.

Cost estimate for the period from 14 January 1995 to 13 January 1996

25. The Secretary-General estimates requirements of UNOMIG for the 12-month period from 14 January 1995 to 13 January 1996 at $20,228,400 gross ($18,992,400 net) or $1,685,700 gross ($1,582,700 net) per month (see A/49/429, para. 32 and annex V). However, the Committee was informed that these estimates have been revised as follows: $21,464,400 gross ($20,228,400 net) instead of $20,228,400 gross ($18,992,400 net) and $1,788,700 gross ($1,685,700 net) instead of $1,685,700 gross ($1,582,700 net).

26. With regard to civilian personnel costs, the Secretary-General estimates a total of $7,818,100 (see A/49/429, annex V). The Committee notes that this amount includes travel to and from the Mission area. The Committee expressed concern that there might be some element of overlap or double-counting in the calculations of estimates for official travel and the element of travel included in common staff costs. The Committee was informed that the methodology for the calculation of travel estimates is under review so as to eliminate any possible double-counting.

27. The Committee was informed that the estimates for the civilian personnel costs for this period were calculated on the basis that UNOMIG will be fully staffed by 13 January 1995. Therefore, no vacancy factor was taken into account when calculating these costs. However, the Committee was informed that an amount of $142,600 can be reduced in respect of eight Professional posts to be filled by mission appointees who are not eligible for post adjustment. It is the view of the Committee that, since the vacancy factor was 46 per cent for international staff and 50 per cent for local staff, as at 30 November 1994 (see para. 17 above), vacancies may persist during the period from 14 January 1995 to 13 January 1996, leading to further savings under this item. Accordingly, the Committee recommends that this estimate be reduced by $142,600.

28. With regard to common staff costs, the Committee was informed that the amount of $2,118,400 can be reduced by $175,000 in respect of one-way emplacement travel of 35 international civilian staff and $145,800 for local staff. Upon inquiry, the Committee was informed that these costs were based on full standards. In the opinion of the Committee, given the nature of UNOMIG, expenditure under many of the standard elements used in the calculation of common staff costs may, in the course of this period, not arise at all or may not be necessary to the full extent. Accordingly, the Committee recommends that this estimate be reduced by $320,800.

29. Provision is made for $36,000 under contingent-owned equipment (A/49/429, annex VI, para. 13). The Committee was informed that the inclusion of this

amount was an error. Accordingly, the Committee recommends that this estimate be reduced by $36,000.

30. The Secretary-General estimates a total of $649,200 for transport operations. The Committee notes that this estimate is based on 170 vehicles (A/49/429, annex VI, paras. 38-40). However, the Committee was informed that since this estimate relates to maintenance of vehicles only it can be reduced by half ($324,600). Accordingly, the Committee recommends that this estimate be reduced by $324,600.

31. Subject to the decision to be taken by the Security Council on the renewal of UNOMIG after 13 January 1995, requirements for UNOMIG should not exceed $1,720,034 gross per month.